

Stream Classification Report

WASHBURN FARM CREEK

WBIC: 2076500

Dunn County

Sheridan and Wilson Twp.

Category 4 Trout Fishing Regulation

Class II Trout Stream



STREAM DESCRIPTION:

Length: 3.48 miles of Class II trout water.

Mean Stream Width: 1.7 m

Gradient: 6.7 m/km

Base Flow Stream Discharge: 0.057cms

Stream Character: Cold water

Stream Order: 2

Habitat Rating: Fair to Good

Coldwater IBI Rating: Very Poor

Ecoregion: North Central Hardwood Forests

STOCKING RECORDS: Washburn Farm Creek is not currently stocked.

WASHBURN FARM CREEK is a small spring-fed tributary to the Hay River located south of the Village of Ridgeland in north central Dunn County. The watershed consists mainly of wooded hills and agricultural lowland. Fish Habitat rankings are Fair for most of Washburn Farm Creek and Good at Station 3 in the headwaters. Much of the stream has been ditched in the past. The riffle/pool and bend habitat is limited and the stream is plagued by fine sediment. Fish habitat in the form of overhanging grasses is common at Station 3. Bank erosion was light at Station 1 and 3, but moderate at Station 2.

FISHERY:

Two stations were sampled in 2015. One adult brook trout was captured at Station 2 and none were found at Station 3 (Table 1). The one trout captured was 7.4 inches long and accounts for the estimate of 16 trout per mile at Station 2 (Fig.1). Past surveys have found brook trout at Stations 1 and 2. None have been found at Station 3. Records from 1976 show a significant adult population, however 1962 records show no trout present. Stocking records are not available, but stocking may have occurred during this period. Reproduction has only been documented at Station 2 during 1994. The single trout captured in 2015 appears to be a product of natural reproduction.

No other fish species were caught or observed during this survey, giving Washburn Farm Creek a Coldwater Index of Biotic Integrity (IBI) rating of Very Low (Table 2). This indicates that environmental degradation has decimated the natural coldwater assemblage of the stream.

FUTURE MANAGEMENT:

A remnant brook trout population existed in Washburn Farm Creek

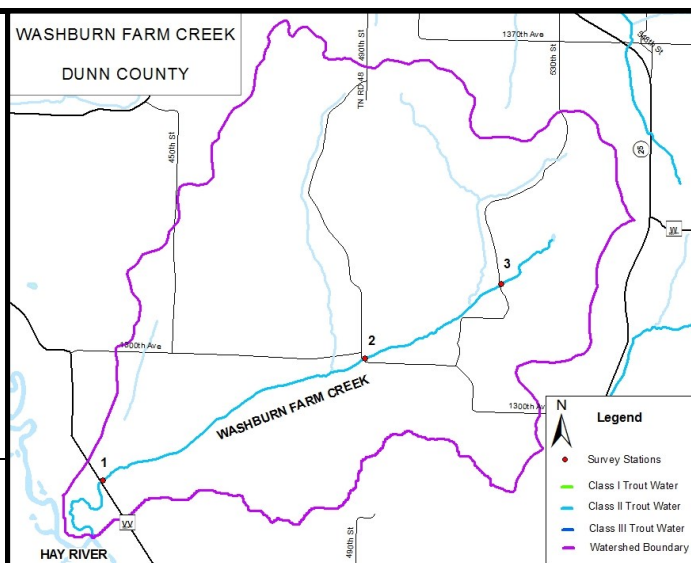
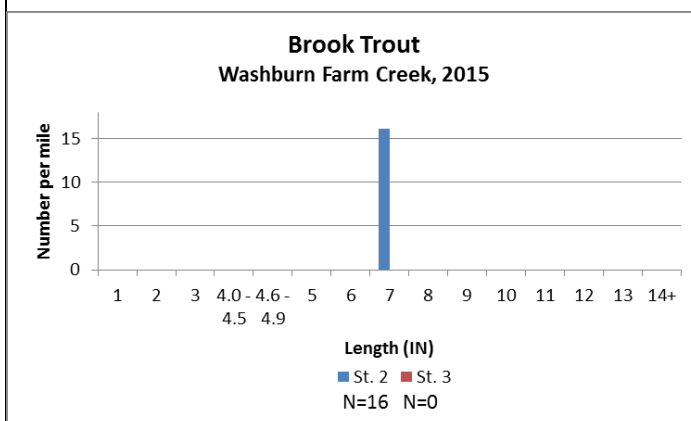


Figure 1 Length distribution



for many years (Table 1). Reproduction appears sporadic. Washburn Farm Creek is classified as a Class II brook trout stream. This classification appears to be correct according to this limited survey (two 100 meter stations). While no juveniles were sampled this time, they have been found in past surveys. Size and density of adult trout is limited by stream size, depth, spawning substrate and lack of instream structure. Water temperature does not appear to be a factor (50F - Station 2 and 58F Station 3). Promotion of Best Management Practices would help to minimize fine sediments in the stream bed. Rotational monitoring should continue using the wadable cold water stream protocol to assess trout populations and species composition.

Table 1 Abundance of brook trout (number per mile) at three stations on Washburn Farm Creek.
 (-) indicates stations that were not surveyed.

| Year | St. 1 | | St. 2 | | St. 3 | |
|------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| | Juv. | Adult | Juv. | Adult | Juv. | Adult |
| 1962 | 0 | 0 | - | - | - | - |
| 1976 | 0 | 462 | - | - | - | - |
| 1994 | 0 | 6 | 24 | 12 | 0 | 0 |
| 2015 | - | - | 0 | 16 | 0 | 0 |

Table 2 Relative abundance of fish species found in Washburn Farm Creek in 2015.

| Species | St. 2 | St. 3 |
|-------------------|-------|-------|
| Brook Trout | 1 | 0 |
| Brook Stickleback | 0 | 0 |
| Creek Chub | 0 | 0 |
| Johnny Darter | 0 | 0 |
| Mottled Sculpin | 0 | 0 |
| White Sucker | 0 | 0 |

For more information on Washburn Farm Creek, you can contact the following persons:

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